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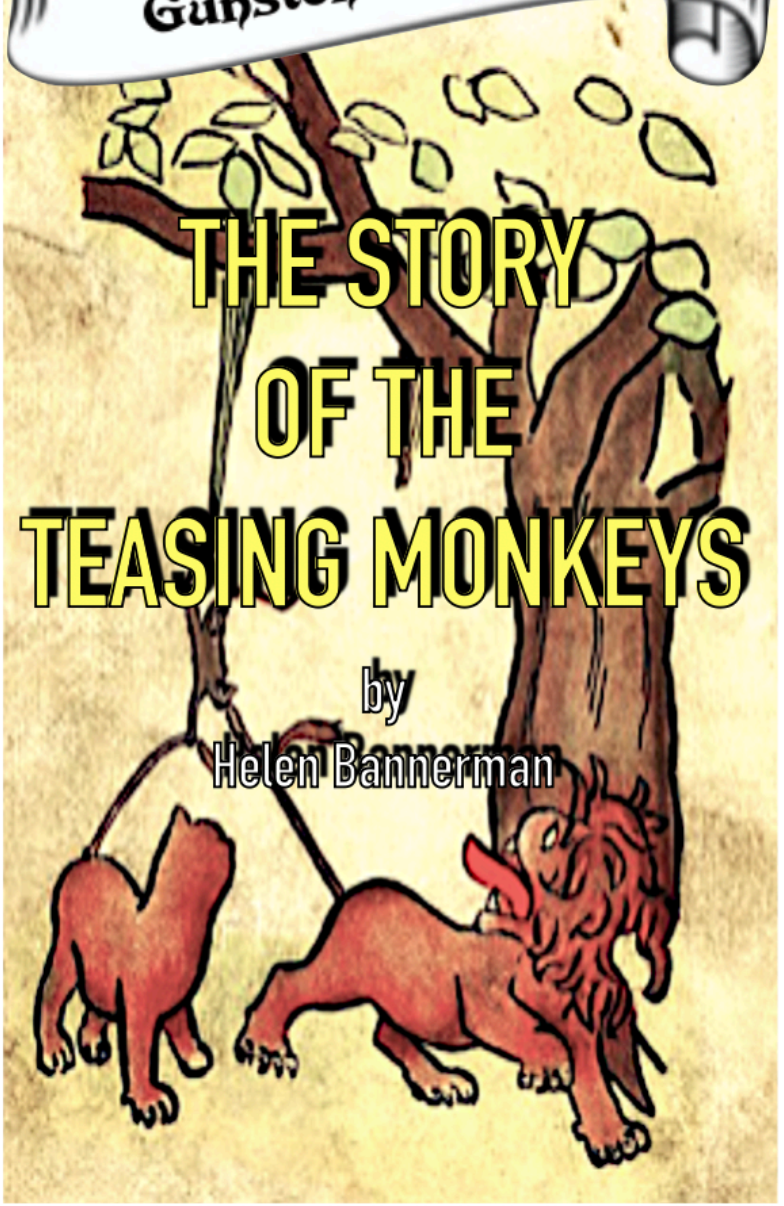

THE STORY OF THE TEASING MONKEYS

by

Helen Bannerman

The Story of the Teasing Monkey

Helen Bannerman

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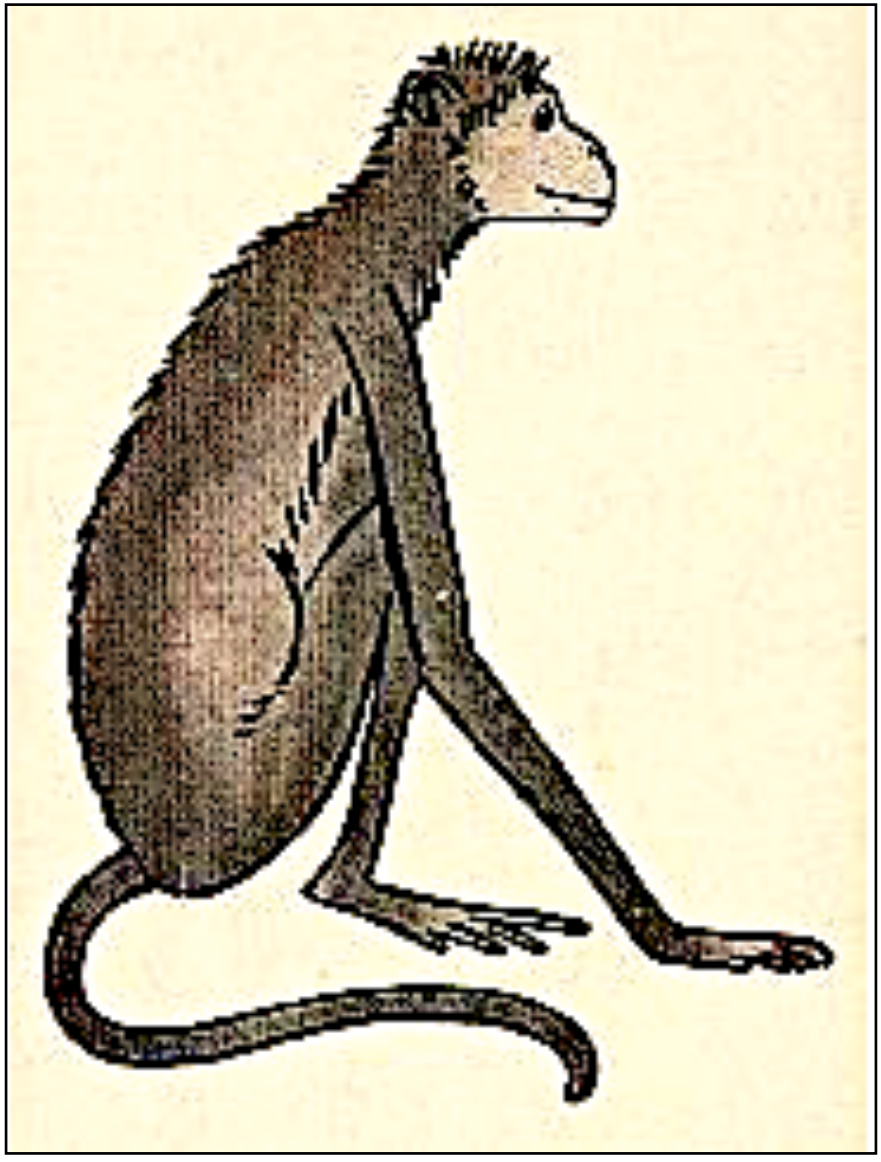
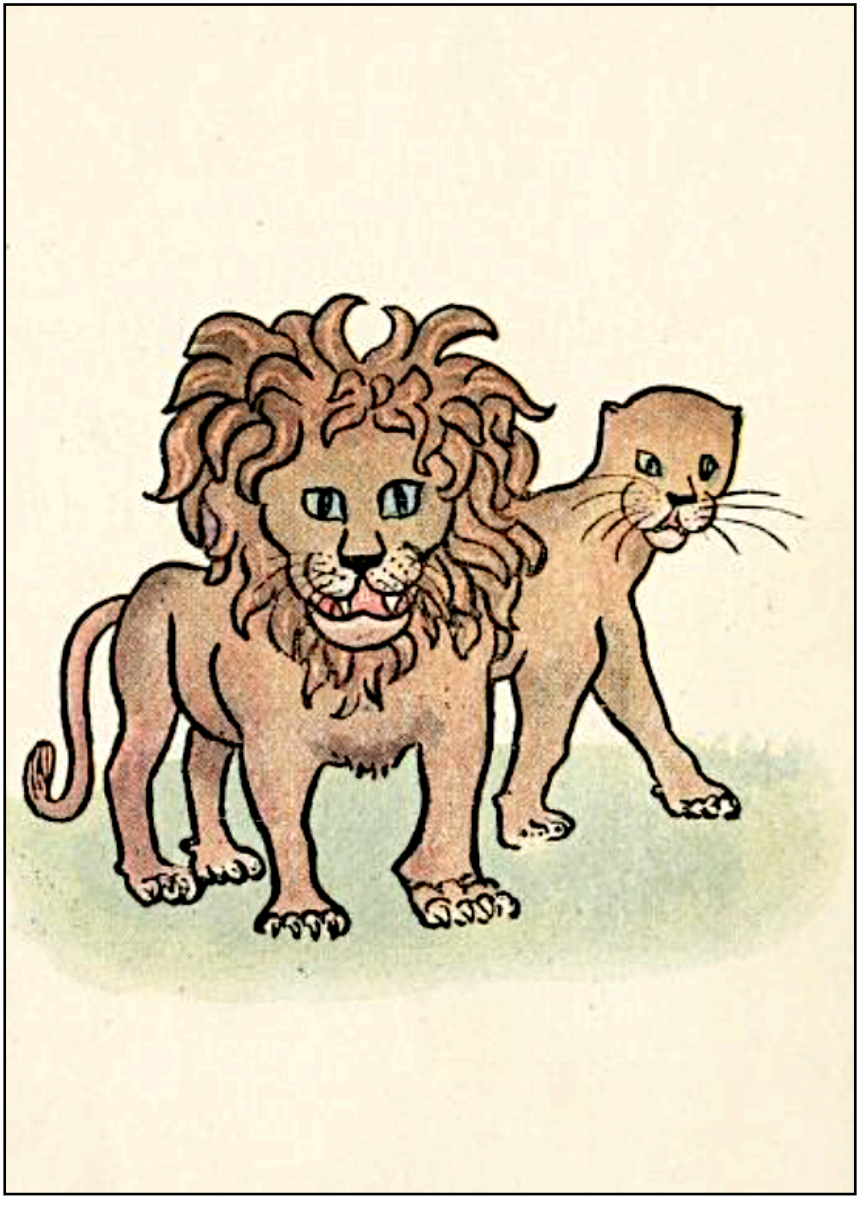
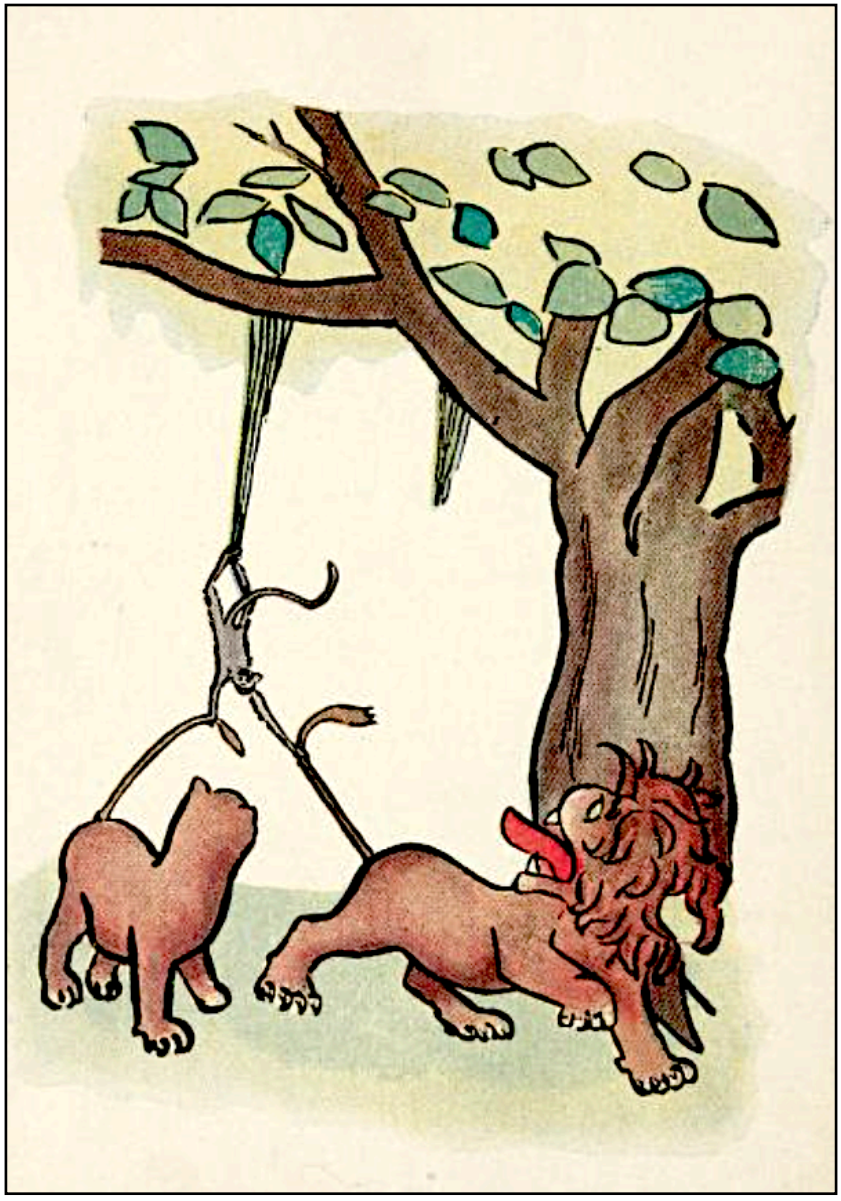
The Story of the Teasing Monkey



Once upon a time there was a very mischievous little monkey, who lived in a big banyan tree, and his name was Jacko.

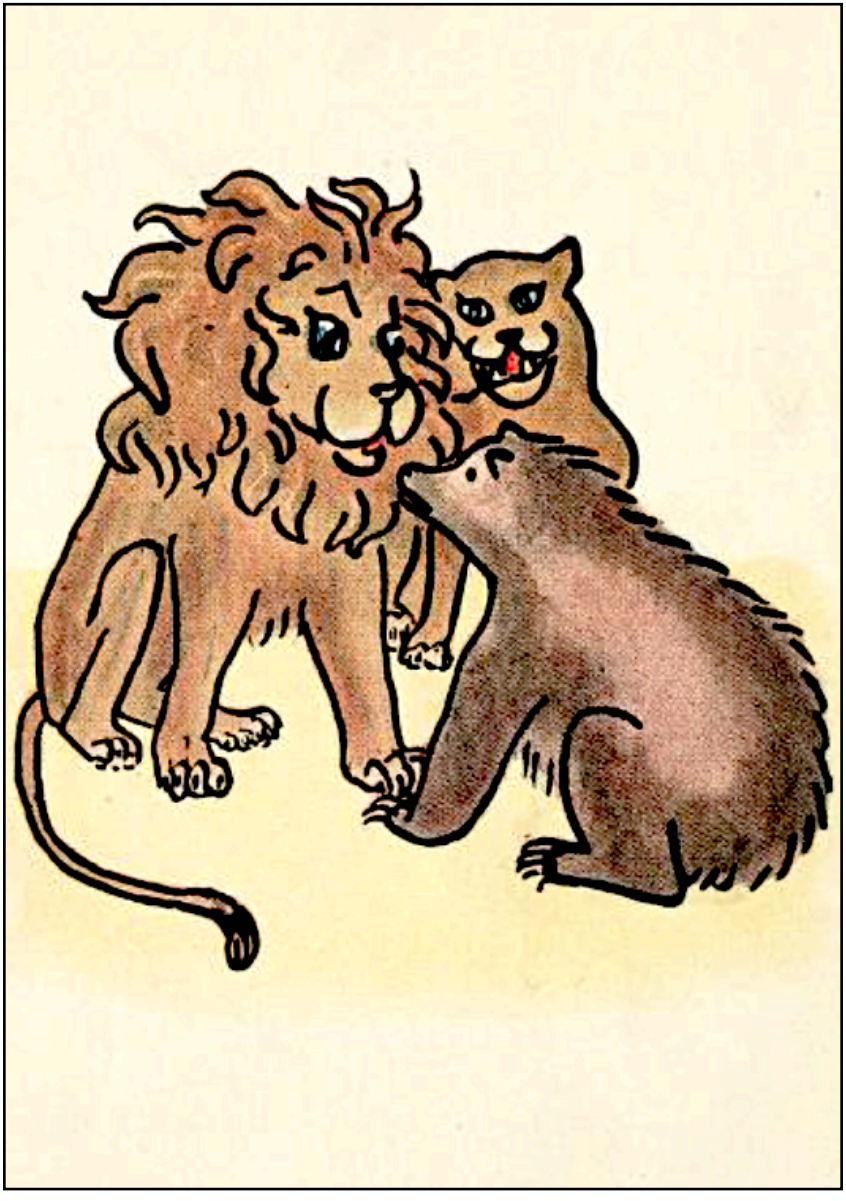


And in the jungle below there lived a huge, fierce old lion and lioness.



Now Jacko was a very teasing monkey. He used to climb down the long trailing roots of the banyan tree, and pull the tails of all the other creatures, and then scamper up again, before they could catch him.

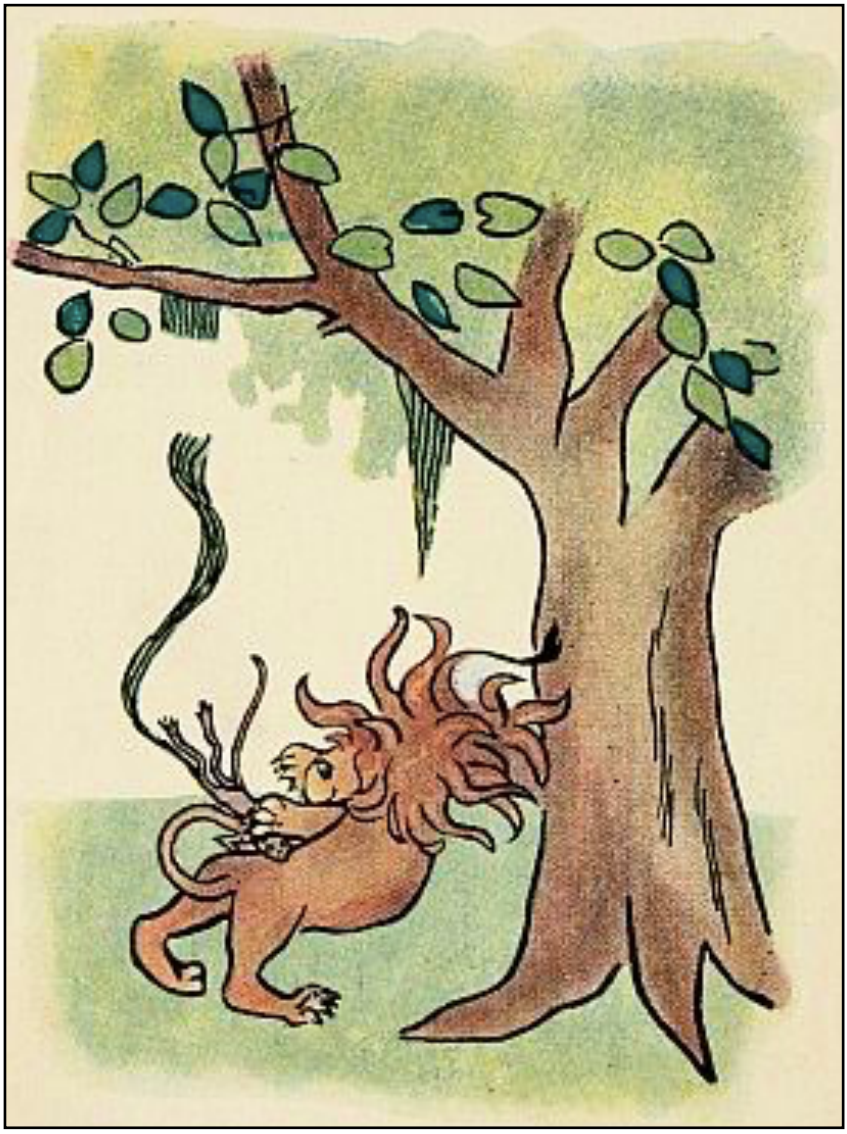
And he was so bold, he even pulled the tails of the lion and lioness one day.



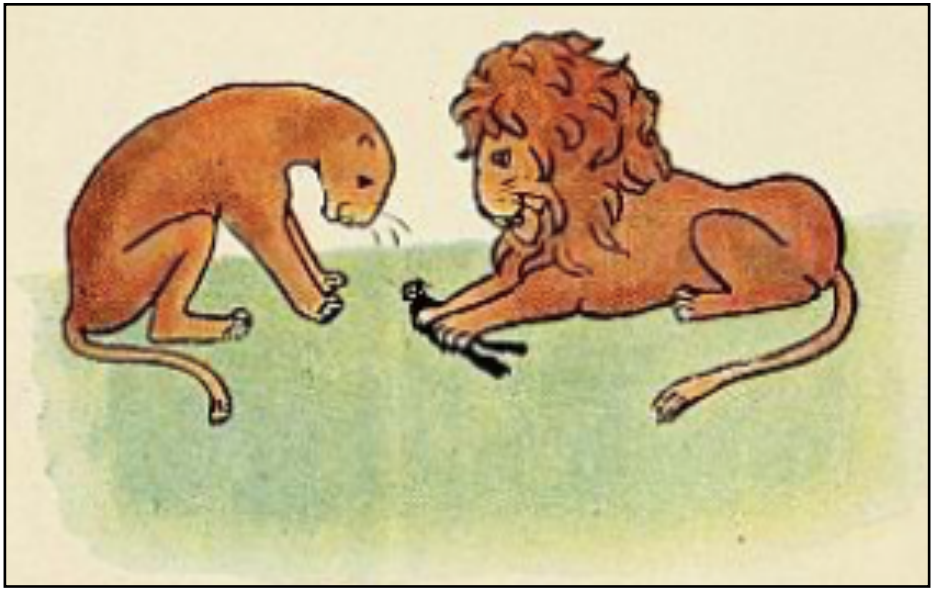
This made them so angry that—

They went to a grim old bear they knew, and they arranged with him that he should come with them to the banyan tree, when Jacko was away.

So he came, and standing on the lion's head, he gnawed the roots through till they were so thin they would not bear a jerk.

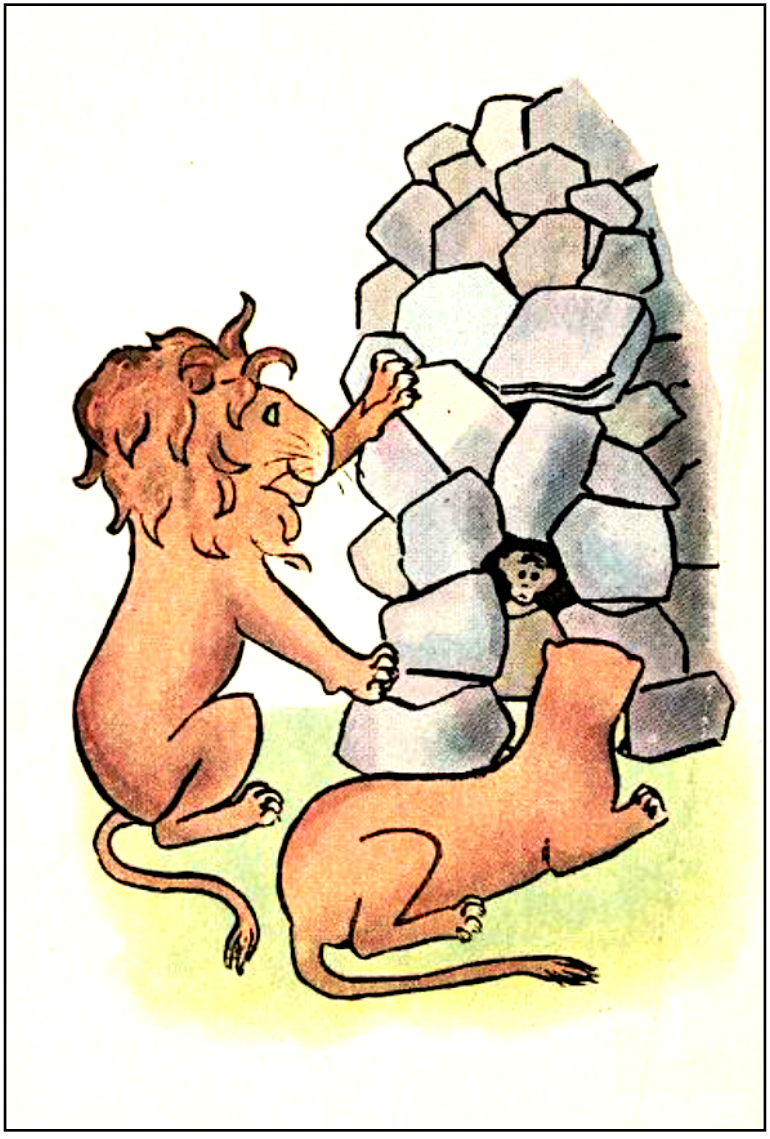


And next time Jacko pulled the lion's tail he gave a great tug—the roots broke, and down fell Jacko, into the huge, fierce grim old lion's jaws!!



"Come here, my dear!" roared the lion.

The lioness came and looked at Jacko. "He is a very thin monkey," said she; "we had better put him in the larder for a week to fatten him, and then ask Mr Bear to dinner."

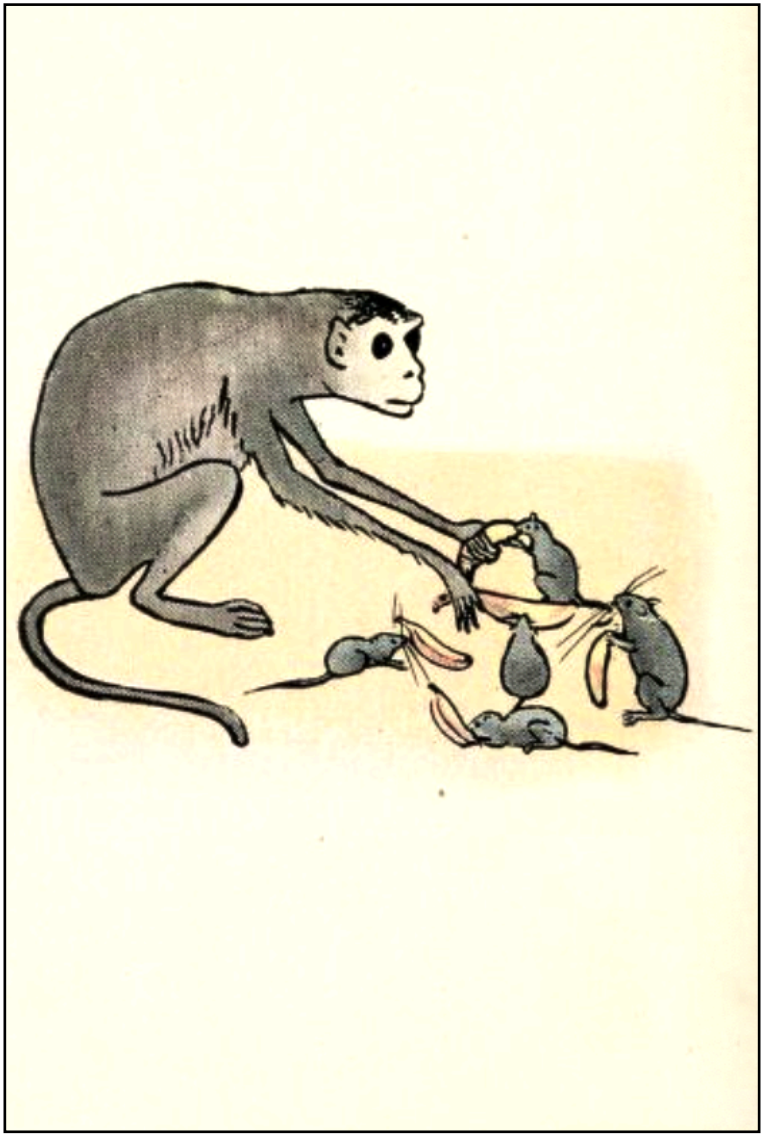


So they put him in the larder, which was just a little piece at the end of their cave, built up with big stones, and while the lion built it up, the lioness lay ready to spring on him if he tried to escape. It was very dark and very cold, and Jacko did not like it at all.

They left a little window to feed him by, and every day they gave him as many bananas as he liked, because they knew monkeys ate bananas, and they could get them easily.

Then the lioness wrote a leaf-letter to the bear, asking him to dinner,

which he, of course,
accepted with pleasure.



But Jacko did not get fat, and the reason of that was that he soon tired of bananas, and only ate one every day. He gave all the others to the rats.

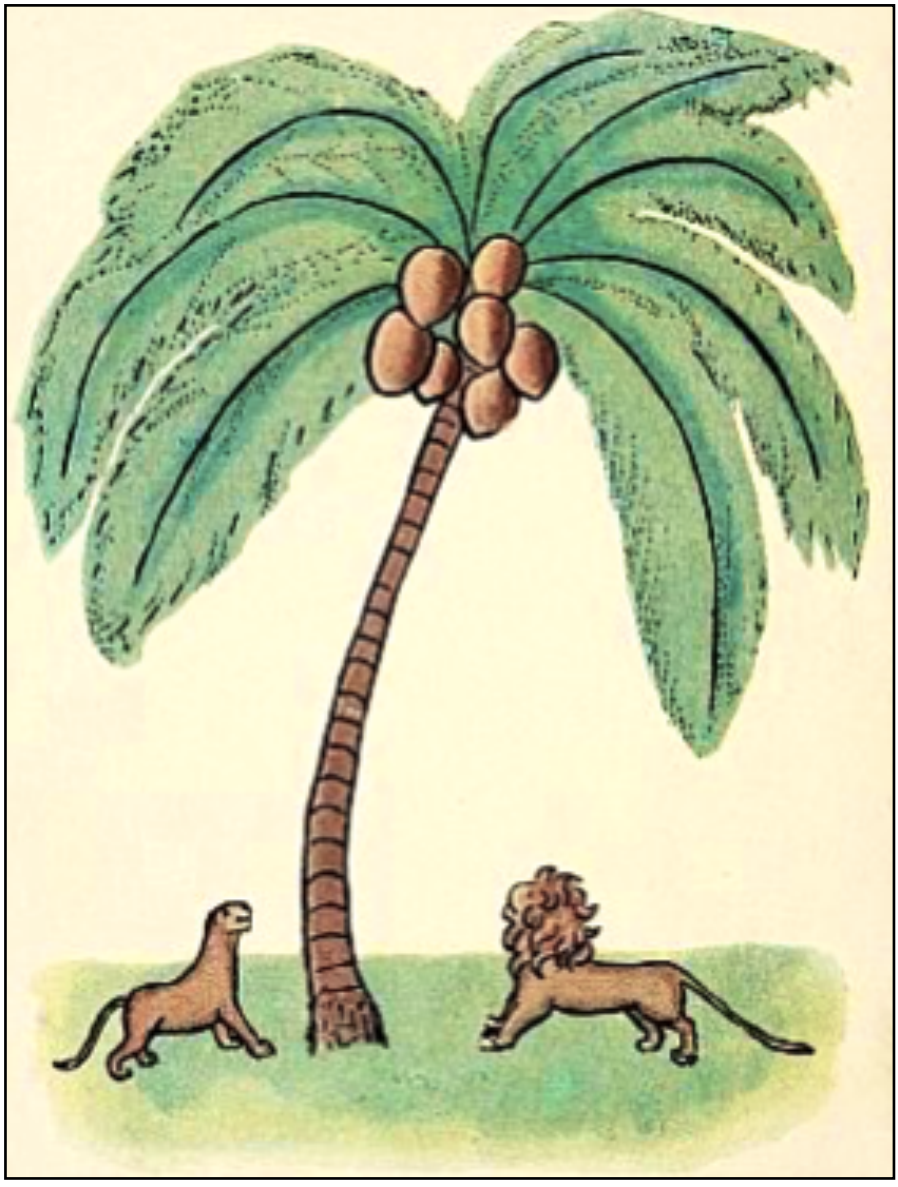
The lion and lioness were rather worried because Jacko did not get fat, so one day they stole in to listen to him talking to the rats, and as it happened they were just talking about bananas.

"I am tired of bananas," said Jacko. "I wish I could get a cocoa-nut."

"It would make you very fat," said the rats.

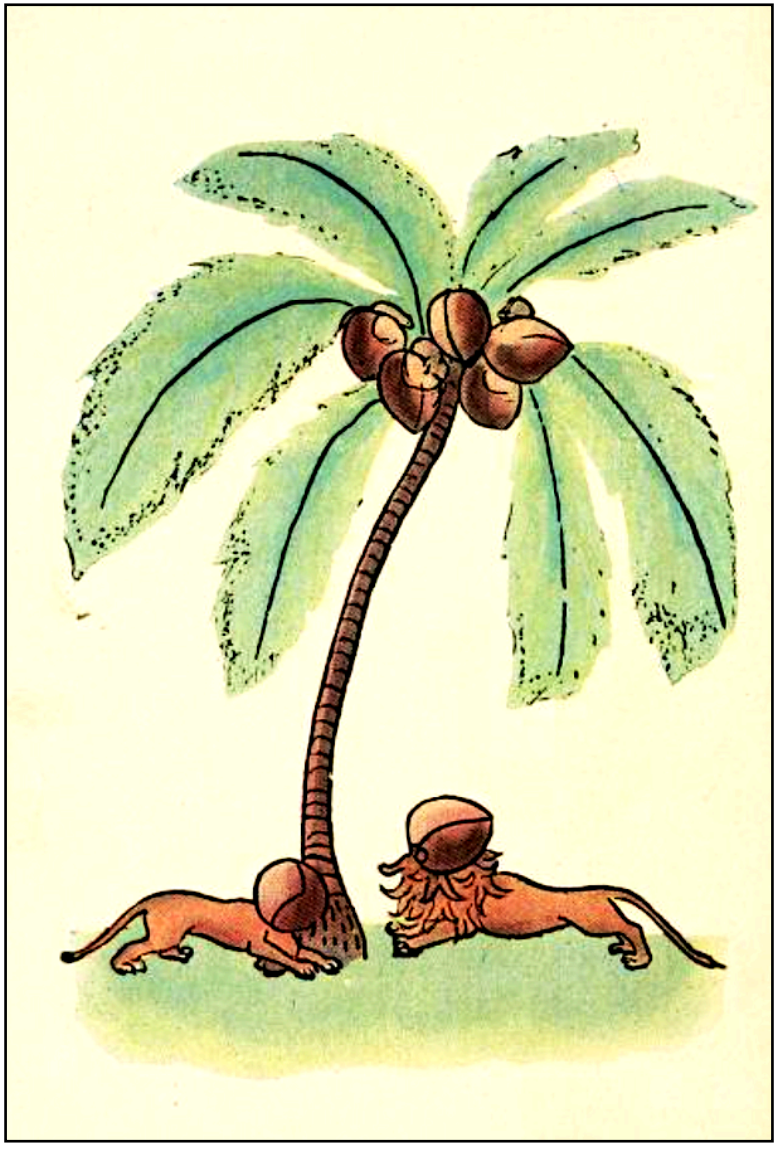
"Yes," said Jacko, "and I don't want to be fat for those old lions."

"Ho, ho!" said the lions. "A cocoa-nut will make him fat; we'll get him one at once."



But when they came to the tree they could not reach a single cocoa-nut!

So the lion went back and told the little rats *very fiercely* that he would tear down the stones, and eat them all up at once, if they did not fetch him down some cocoa-nuts at once.



This terrified the little rats. They scampered up the tree, and gnawed off the cocoa-nuts as fast as they ever could.

But as the cocoa-nuts fell on the heads of the lion and lioness, and hurt them very much, the little rats took care to stay up the tree till it was dark.

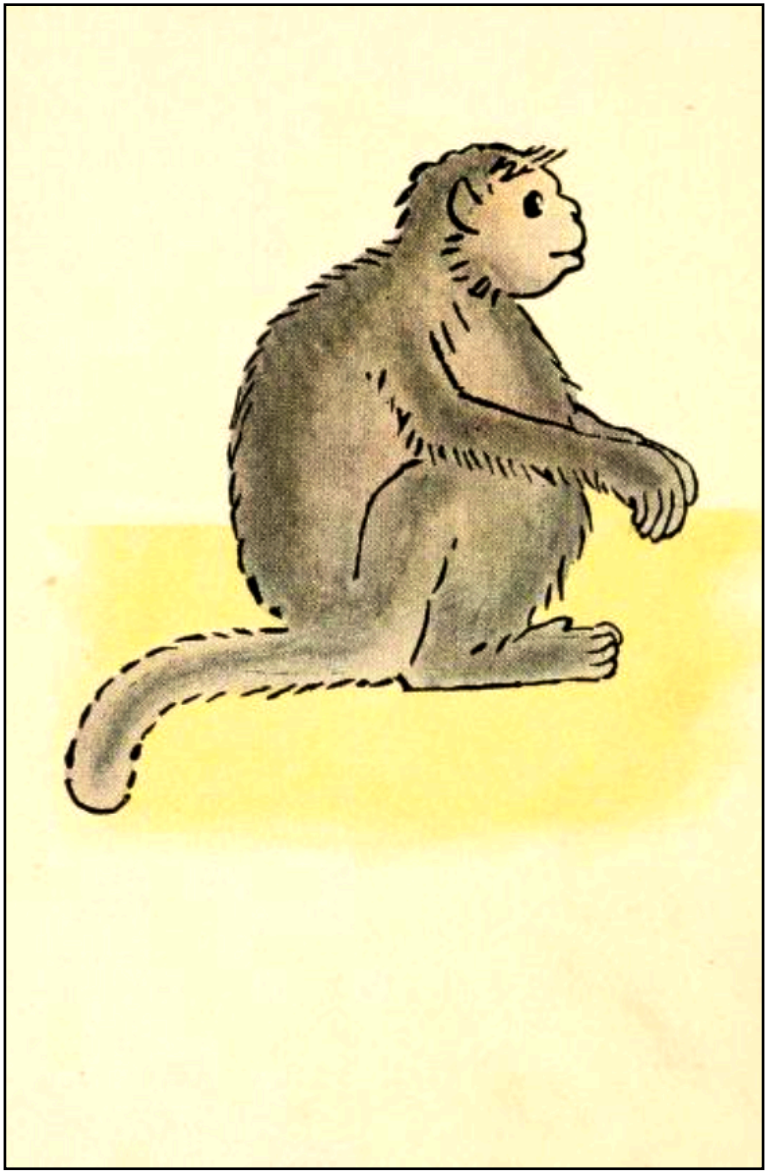
As soon as their heads felt a little better, the lion and lioness took the cocoa-nuts.

And carried them to Jacko.

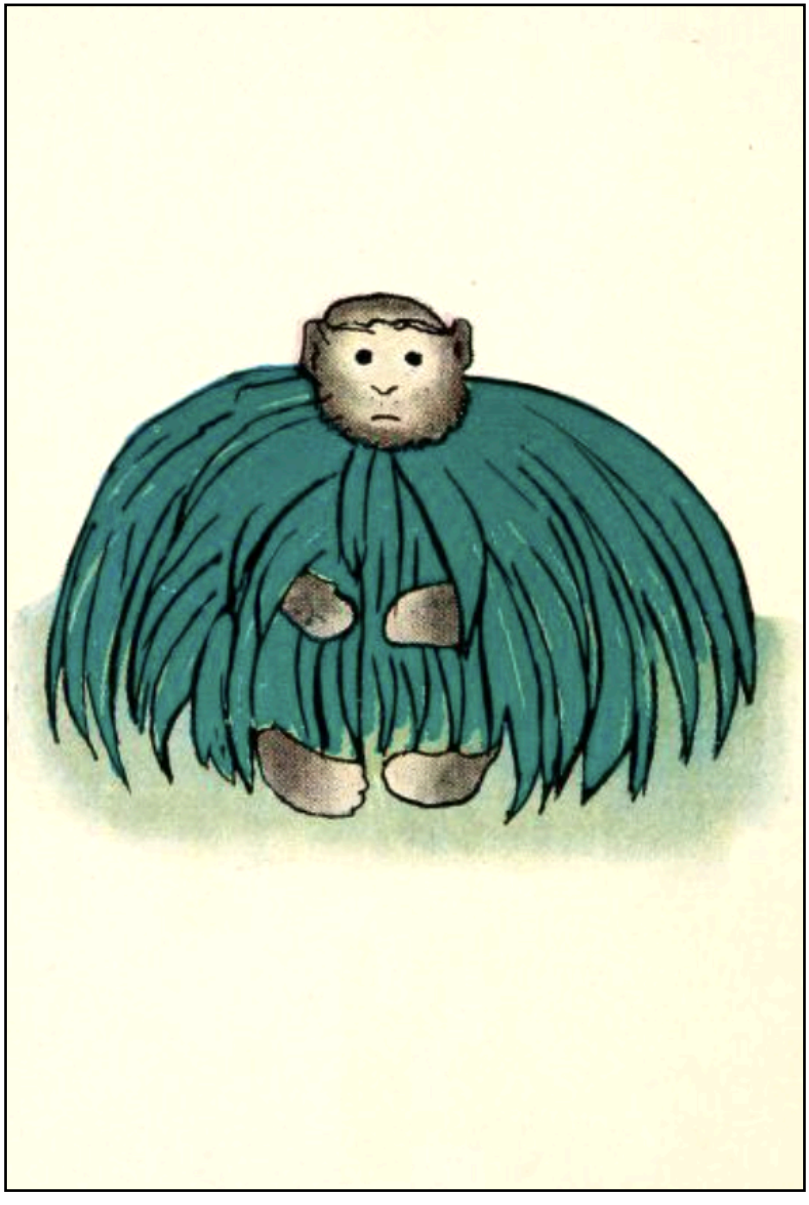
They had to make a very large hole to put them in, but they built it up carefully again.

Jacko was very much delighted to get the cocoa-nuts, but he had hard work tearing off the hairy outside.

However at last he got it all off. Then he smashed the cocoa-nuts with a stone, and drank the milk, and began eating the nut; and wasn't it good after a whole week of bananas!



While he ate it, he amused himself making a nice warm coat for himself of the hairy husk of the cocoa-nuts, and he was so busy he did not notice how much he was eating.

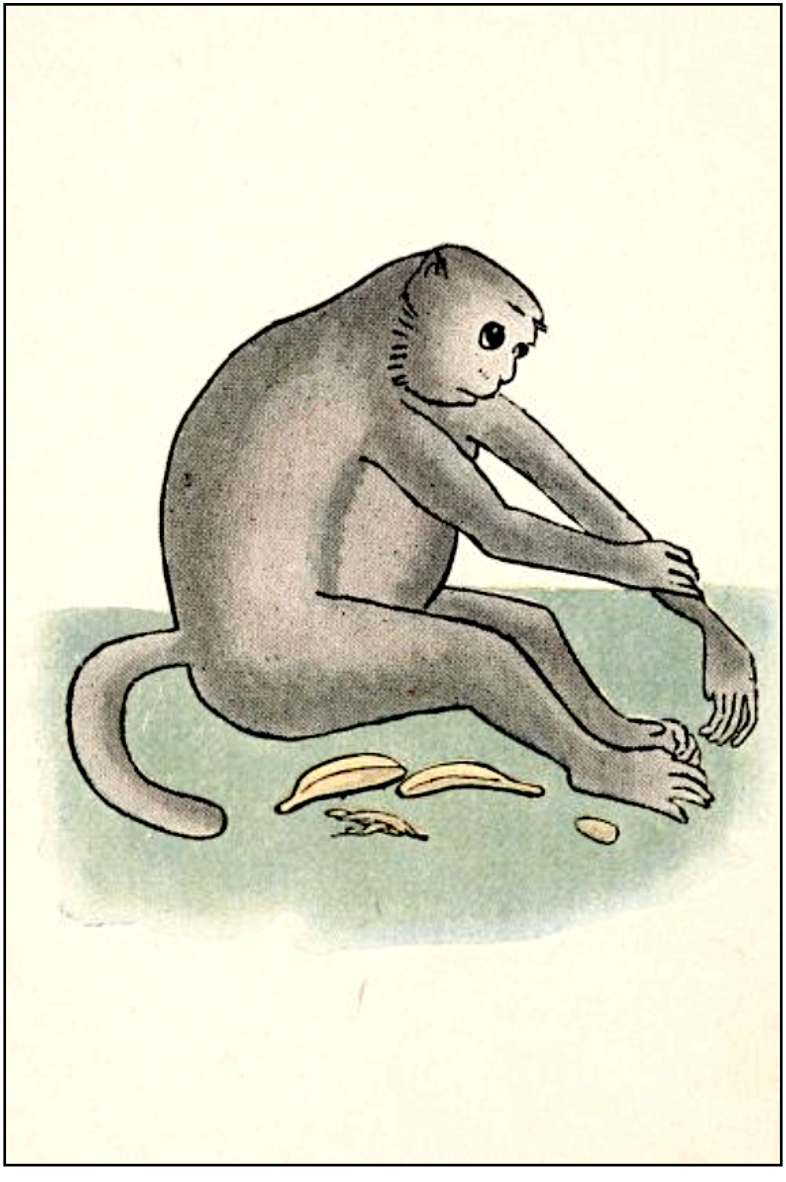


And when he put his warm coat on he just looked fearfully fat.

And the lion and lioness peeping in, thought it was all Jacko, and they were delighted.

"Isn't he fat and tender?" they said. "We'll eat him to-night, and not wait for Mr. Bear."

And they went out for a walk, to get a good appetite.

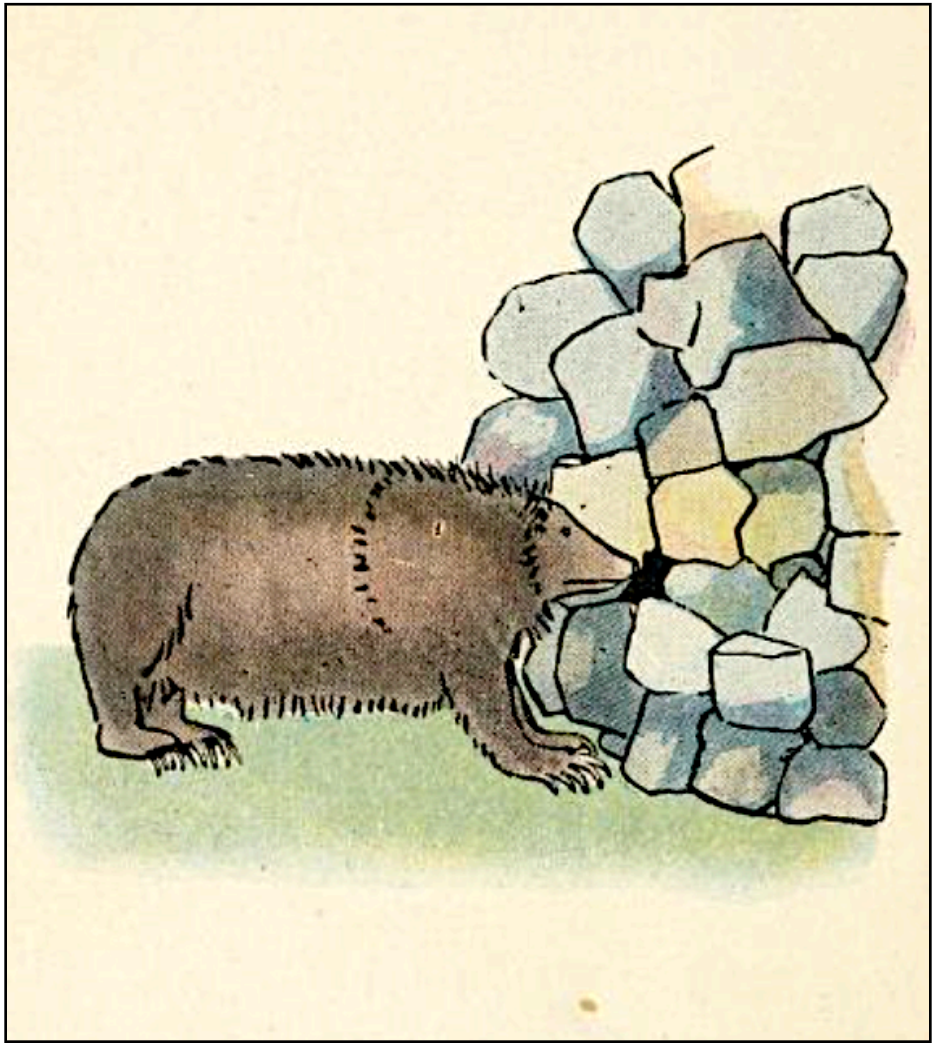


Poor Jacko! He did not eat any more cocoa-nut after he heard that. He pulled off his coat, and smoothed his hair down with his little paws, but still he looked fat.

And he smeared himself all over with bananas to make the hair lie flat, but *still* he looked fat.

So he put on his warm coat again, and lay down, and cried himself to sleep.

But you must know the bear was a very greedy old bear, and that very afternoon, while Jacko was asleep, he came to have a private peep at him.



And when he saw him looking so lovely and fat, he just could not resist the temptation, and began pulling down the stones as fast as he could, intending to eat him all by himself. But he was an awkward, clumsy old bear, and all of a sudden—

With a rumble and a *rattle* and a CLATTER, and a

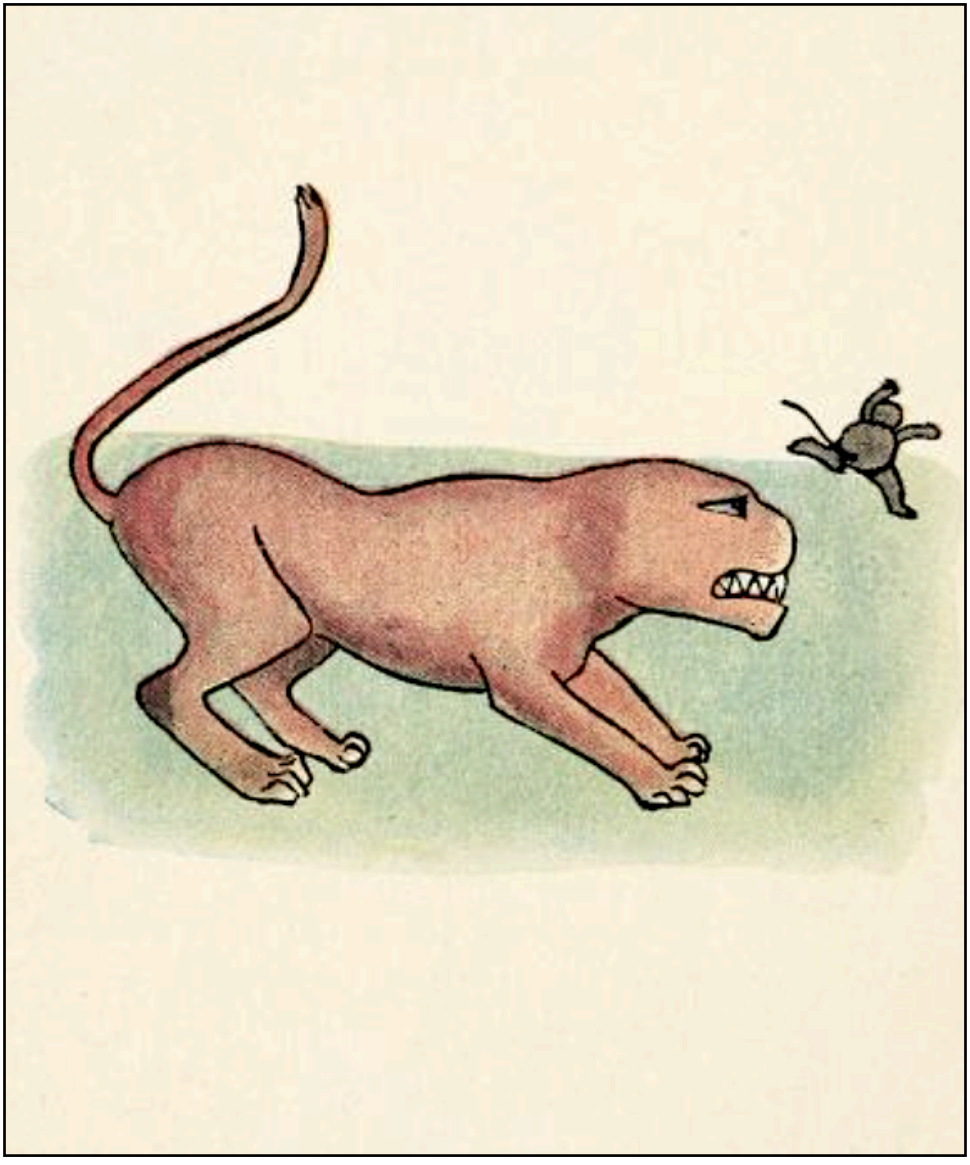
CRASH!!!

the stones all came down on top of him, waking poor little Jacko, and scaring him nearly out of his wits. But he had the sense to scramble out as fast as he could.

The lion and lioness were just coming back, and when they heard the noise they came tearing home like the wind, and met little Jacko just in the mouth of the cave.

With a fearful roar the lion struck at him with his claws, but they only stuck in the—

Coconut coat.
Jacko wriggled out of it and ran on.



With another fearful roar, the lioness seized him in her teeth.

But Jacko was so round with eating cocoa-nut, and so slippery with banana, that he popped out from between her teeth, like an orange seed, and ran on.

And the next minute he was safe, and scrambling up the cocoa-nut tree at a rate which shook down most of the cocoa-nuts on to the heads of the lion and lioness.

So the lion had a sore head, and the lioness had a sore head, and the bear had a sore head, and they had nothing for dinner but...

BANANAS!

THE END

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HELEN BANNERMAN

1862-1946

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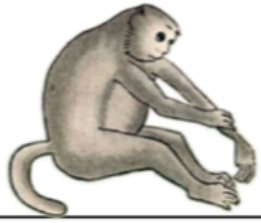
THE TEASING MONKEY - 1907



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